

## Palestine's Legal Scene

Your weekly survey of the most important publications and activities related to Palestine, from local and international sources

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**By Law for Palestine**

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This weekly report reviews the legal dynamics of the Palestine question, and everything related to international law and Palestine. The report includes an account of the most important publications, activities, and conferences related to Palestine at the local, regional, international levels. The report further covers decisions, decrees, and judicial orders affecting the Palestinian cause, whether made at the official, academic or public levels. The report aims to be a reference for monitoring, documenting, and archiving the latest human rights developments related to Palestine, and to present them to individuals, researchers, study centers, and official, academic, and legal institutions concerned.

### **Judicial decrees, decisions, positions, and orders issued by official Palestinian bodies:**

- **The Department of Refugee Affairs of the Palestine Liberation Organization [condemned](#) the decision by the Israeli occupation authorities to demolish 25 residential buildings in the Nur Shams refugee camp, describing it as a war crime and an act of ethnic cleansing. The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also [condemned](#) the Israeli Knesset's advancement of a draft law aimed at legalizing the deprivation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) of basic services in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and permitting the seizure of its premises and properties. In addition, it [condemned](#) the escalation of organized settler terrorism against the Palestinian people, including the announcement of thousands of new settlement units in the West Bank. (December 16-18, 2025)**
- **The Jerusalem Governorate [warned](#) of the serious risks posed by the new Israeli draft law approved by the Knesset in a preliminary reading, which criminalizes "interference in religious practices in public spaces." It stressed that applying the law to the courtyards of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, on the grounds that they constitute a public space, would pose a direct and**

dangerous threat to the historical and legal status quo at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. (December 18, 2025)

- **The Grand Mufti of Palestine, Mahmoud Al-Habbash, [condemned](#) the Israeli occupation police's storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the besiegement of worshippers at the Husan Mosque, describing the action as a serious escalation and a direct targeting of Islamic holy sites. (December 19, 2025)**

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**Judicial decrees, decisions, positions, and orders issued by official Israeli bodies:**

- **Following the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Court's rejecting of Israel's request to annul the arrest warrants against its leaders, the Israeli Prime Minister's Office [stated](#) that Israel is not a member of the Court and does not recognize its jurisdiction, claiming that the Court is acting on political motives. The statement added that the conduct of Prosecutor Karim Khan reflects a distortion of the law and due legal process. (December 16, 2025)**

**Judicial decrees, decisions, positions, and orders issued by Arab, European, and international bodies:**

- **The Commissioner-General of UNRWA [warned](#) that global solidarity with refugees is waning, amid escalating conflicts, the failure of political solutions, and severe reductions in humanitarian funding, all of which are exacerbating displacement crises worldwide. He stressed that providing protection to refugees is a binding international obligation enshrined in international law. (December 14, 2025)**
- **The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) [warned](#) that humanitarian assistance in Gaza is being delayed because aid cargo is routinely deprioritised in favour of commercial goods, as winter storms continue to worsen already dire living conditions for displaced families. OCHA spokesperson in Gaza, Olga Cherevko, said that needs are rising faster than aid can be delivered, outpacing the capacity of humanitarian organisations to respond. (December 15, 2025)**
- **The UN Human Rights Office [said](#) that the Occupied Palestinian Territory is witnessing an unprecedented assault on civic space, as the ability to monitor and document human rights violations and abuses, seek accountability, and organise and advocate for human rights continues to shrink. The Office noted that over the past two years, Israel has intensified its repression against journalists and human rights defenders, and local and international non-**

governmental organisations, severely undermining a broad range of Palestinians' human rights. (December 16, 2025)

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- The five European countries serving as members of the UN Security Council [welcomed](#) the significant progress made in recent months toward ending the bloodshed in Gaza and securing the release of hostages. They also called for the swift identification and return of the remains of the last deceased hostage, urged Hamas to disarm and renounce violence, and reaffirmed their steadfast commitment to a two-state solution. (December 16, 2025)
- The UN Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Ramiz Alakbarov, [condemned](#) relentless Israeli settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, warning that it fuels tensions, restricts Palestinians' access to their land, and threatens the viability of a contiguous and sovereign Palestinian State. He said that in 2025, settlement advancement reached its highest level since UN monitoring began in 2017, and urged Israel to meet its obligations under international law. (December 16, 2025)
- The United States announced a [decision](#) to impose a complete ban on the entry of individuals using travel documents issued or endorsed by the Palestinian Authority, citing the need to protect U.S. national security. The announcement justified the move by referring to the presence of groups designated as terrorist organizations operating in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as limited or absent capacity to conduct proper vetting and identity verification due to the security situation and the recent war. (December 16, 2025)
- The UNRWA USA National Committee [stated](#) that a national coalition of 104 civil society organizations led a joint letter to the U.S. Secretary of State urging the President Donald Trump administration to include UNRWA in recovery and reconstruction plans for the Gaza Strip. The letter stressed the need for the United States to reopen channels of communication with UNRWA and allow the Agency to continue carrying out its mandate. (December 16, 2025)
- The United Nations General Assembly [adopted](#) the draft resolution entitled "Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources" by an overwhelming majority. The resolution reaffirmed the Security Council's call in resolution No. 2334, urging states to distinguish, in their dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. (December 19, 2025)

- US Secretary of State Marco Rubio [said](#) the United States requires clarification on the mandate, funding mechanism, and rules of engagement of the international stabilization force in Gaza before it can expect to secure troop commitments from participating countries. He noted that discussions are underway with several states, including Pakistan and Ethiopia, and confirmed efforts to announce “the Board of Peace” and establish a Palestinian technocratic committee to manage day-to-day governance. He added that these steps are intended to prepare for the implementation of the second phase within two to three years, while the Palestinian Authority hopes to assume control in a shorter timeframe. (December 19, 2025)
- [Qatar](#), [Egypt](#), [the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#), and [the Muslim Council of Elders](#) condemned the Israeli occupation government’s approval of the establishment of 19 settlements in the occupied West Bank, describing it as a blatant violation of international legitimacy resolutions and the rights of the Palestinian people. (December 16/17, 2025)
- The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League, and the African Union Commission [condemned](#) Israeli statements aiming to open the Rafah crossing in one direction, and expressed their absolute rejection of any attempts or plans to forcibly displace the Palestinian people. (December 16, 2025)
- The President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Lorenzo Fontana, [expressed](#) his support for the recognition of a Palestinian state. In a statement published by the Italian news agency ANSA, Fontana called for the need to do so with “credible interlocutors.” (December 17, 2025)
- The United States [imposed](#) sanctions on two additional judges of the International Criminal Court after they rejected an appeal filed by Israel against arrest warrants issued by the Court. The United States said the sanctions were imposed due to the judges’ direct involvement in what it described as illegitimate procedures targeting Israel. (December 18, 2025)
- The International Criminal Court strongly [rejected](#) the U.S. administration’s imposition of new sanctions on two of its judges, considering the move a flagrant attack on the independence of an impartial international judicial institution operating under a mandate conferred by its States Parties from across regions. (December 18, 2025)
- The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) [issued](#) an [update](#) on the situation in the Gaza Strip, confirming that despite a noticeable improvement in food security and nutrition since the announcement of the ceasefire, conditions remain critical. An estimated 1.6 million people are expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity through mid-April 2026, while around

101,000 children under the age of five are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition through mid-October 2026. (December 19, 2025)

- The Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, [stated](#) that the Gaza Strip is still experiencing a man-made hunger crisis, noting that the latest report issued by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) underscored the fragility of the gains achieved since the start of the ceasefire. Lazzarini also confirmed that UNRWA has food parcels sufficient for 1.1 million people, as well as quantities of flour enough for the entire population of the Gaza Strip, awaiting permission to enter the territory. In the same context, UN Secretary-General António Guterres [confirmed](#) that the IPC report indicates that famine has been pushed back, but warned that the situation remains extremely fragile. (December 19, 2025)
- A report by *The Wall Street Journal* [stated](#) that the United States has presented potential donor countries with a proposal dubbed the “Project Sunrise” to rebuild the Gaza Strip and transform it into a luxury coastal destination and a high-tech city over approximately 20 years, at an estimated cost of \$112 billion during the first decade. The proposal reportedly conditions the plan on the disarmament of Hamas and the dismantling of its military infrastructure. (December 19, 2025)

#### **Publications of human rights NGOs:**

- The human rights organization B’Tselem [stated](#) that while international attention remains focused on Gaza, Israel has also been advancing the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in the West Bank since October 2023. The organisation stressed that close cooperation between the military and settlers has made killing, destruction and expulsion part of daily life, noting that more than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed and dozens of communities forcibly displaced. (December 15, 2025)
- The Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor [stated](#) that nearly two months into the ceasefire agreement, the majority of Gaza’s population remains displaced and unable to return to their homes. It noted that hundreds of thousands of houses have been destroyed or severely damaged, leaving families exposed to winter storms, as fragile tents collapse under rain and wind. The organisation added that Israel’s genocide continues and the destruction of homes continues. (December 15, 2025)
- The Hind Rajab Foundation (HRF) announced that it has [filed](#) a criminal complaint before the Italian judicial authorities against Israeli soldier Israel Yitzhki, a member of the Israel Defense

Forces (IDF), for alleged war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts of genocide committed during Israel's military campaign in the Gaza Strip. The Foundation stated that the complaint was submitted to the Italian public prosecutor on the basis of universal jurisdiction. (December 15, 2025)

- Amnesty International [stated](#) that the devastation and deaths caused by torrential rain and storms in the occupied Gaza Strip constituted a completely preventable disaster, driven by the restrictions Israel continues to impose on the entry of critical supplies despite the ceasefire. The organisation noted that at least 81% of buildings have been destroyed or damaged, while approximately 58% of the Gaza Strip is designated as a restricted area. Amnesty International said this constitutes further evidence of the deliberate infliction of living conditions on Palestinians intended to cause their physical destruction, an act prohibited under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. (December 17, 2025).
- Amnesty International [stated](#) that countries must prevent the ship *Holger G*, sailing under the Portuguese flag and carrying ammunition components destined for Israel, from docking at or transiting through their ports, citing the apparent risk that its cargo could contribute to the ongoing genocide in the occupied Gaza Strip. (December 18, 2025)

#### **Opinion Pieces and features:**

- Arab News [published](#) an opinion article by writer Osama Al-Sharif titled: "*How Israel Exploits Terror to Deflect Attention from the Gaza Atrocities*". (December 15, 2025)
- Mondoweiss [published](#) an opinion article by Jennine Khalik titled: "*How the Bondi Beach Attack Is Being Weaponized to Suppress the Palestinian Movement in Australia*". (December 18, 2025)
- Mondoweiss [published](#) an opinion article by Jonathan Ofir titled: "*Netanyahu is Exploiting the Bondi Beach Massacre to Build Support for the Gaza Genocide and is Fueling Antisemitism in the Process*". (December 18, 2025)

#### **Human rights conferences and events:**

- Middle East Studies Center in Amman - Jordan, [organized](#) a political and legal seminar that discussed the possibility of applying United Nations resolutions on decolonization to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, with the participation of a number of diplomats, politicians, academics, and legal researchers. (2025)



**Upcoming human rights opportunities and events:**

- The Master's Program in Israeli Studies at Birzeit University, in partnership with Mada al-Carmel – the Arab Center for Applied Social Research, is [offering](#) an educational course titled “Introduction to Israeli Studies.” The course aims to deepen critical understanding of “Israel” as a settler-colonial project and its political, legal, and security dimensions, taking into account recent developments following the Gaza genocide. Sessions will be held weekly via Zoom from April 7 to June 23, 2026. The application deadline is February 1, 2026.
- The International Institute of Social Studies (The Hague), in partnership with Birzeit University, has opened a [call](#) for abstracts for an international conference exploring the realization of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, sovereignty, and statehood. The conference will examine roles, responsibilities, and priorities, with a special focus on international solidarity, from academic, civic, and political perspectives. It will cover three main themes: political and diplomatic challenges in contexts of impunity; academic research on resistance, recognition, and reparations; and the role of civil society and the future of solidarity with Palestinians. The conference will take place on February 13, 2026.